

## Message Text

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ACTION LAB-04

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-07

NSAE-00 SIL-01 IO-13 AID-05 /046 W

-----070658Z 051509 /12

P R 070026Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6404

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, ILO, MY

SUBJECT: INFORMATION ON ILO ACTIVITIES IN MALAYSIA

REF: (A) STATE 003255, (B) STATE 017891

1. SUMMARY. MOST ILO ACTIVITIES IN MALAYSIA IN RECENT YEARS HAVE BEEN CENTERED ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING. IN SPITE OF A LONG ILO INVOLVEMENT IN THIS FIELD AND THE INSTITUTION OF SIX SEPARATE PROJECTS, THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM IN MALAYSIA IS STILL LIMITED IN SCOPE AND UNCORRDINATED, AND THE UNDP AND ILO ARE ABOUT TO INSTITUTE ANOTHER VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROJECT IN THE COUNTRY. SEVERAL OF THE ILO VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROJECTS CAN BE CONSIDERED AS MODEST SUCCESSES, BUT INSTITUTIONAL AND PERSONAL RIVALRIES WITHIN THE GOM, AS WELL AS RACIAL FACTORS, HAVE PREVENTED THE FORMATION OF A COORDINATED VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM SUITABLE TO THE NEEDS OF THE COUNTRY. AN ILO-RUN MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM HAS GENERALLY NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL, WHILE A MODEST SOCIAL SECURITY PROGRAM IS STILL IN PROGRESS AND ITS SUCCESS CANNOT YET BE JUDGED. END SUMMARY.

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2. ALL OF THE EIGHT ACTIVITIES LISTED FOR MALAYSIA IN REF B ARE UNDP-FUNDED, ILO-EXECUTED PROGRAMS. BECAUSE SIX OF THE EIGHT PROJECTS (NO.S 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, AND 8) DEAL WITH VOCATIONAL TRAINING, THIS ANALYSIS WILL TREAT THEM TOGETHER AS A SINGLE PROGRAM. PROJECTS 5 (SOCIAL SECURITY) AND 6 (MANAGEMENT TRAINING) WILL BE ANALSZED

SEPARATELY.

### 3. VOCATIONAL TRAINING

(A) OBJECTIVES. VOCATIONAL TRAINING IS AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN MALAYSIA'S DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM. LIKE OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, MALAYSIA HAS A SHORTAGE OF SKILLED LABOR AND ITS EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM TRADITIONALLY HAS NOT PROVIDED FOR VOCATIONAL TRAINING ON ANY LARGE SCALE. MALAYSIA NEEDS A WELL-FOCUSED AND COMPREHENSIVE VOCATIONAL TRAINING SYSTEM TO ATTRACT SUFFICIENT NUMBERS OF STUDENTS FROM THE TRADITIONALLY MORE PRESTIGIOUS ACADEMIC STREAMS, TO PROVIDE VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR THOSE WHO WOULD NOT IN ANY CASE ENTER ACADEMIC STREAMS AND TO PROVIDE THE SKILLED MANPOWER NECESSARY FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. HOWEVER, IN MALAYSIA THE RACIAL FACTOR COMPLICATES THIS PROBLEM AS IT DOES MOST OTHERS. MOST SKILLED WORKMEN IN THE COUNTRY TODAY ARE ETHNIC CHINESE BECAUSE THE URBAN POPULATION IS HEAVILY CHINESE. A MAJOR GOAL OF THE GOM IS TO BRING MALAYS INTO THE MODERN ECONOMY AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IS AN IMPORTANT TOOL IN ACHIEVING THAT GOAL. ONE OF THE OBJECTIVES OF THE THIRD MALAYSIA PLAN IS "THE ORIENTATION AND EXPANSION OF THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM TOWARDS MEETING NATIONAL MANPOWER NEEDS, ESPECIALLY IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY." THE UNDP COUNTRY PROGRAMS FOR MALAYSIA (THE FIRST LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COVERS 1972 -1976 AND THE SECOND 1977 -1981) WERE, TO USE THE LANGUAGE OF THE SECOND COUNTRY PROGRAM "BASED ON AND INTEGRATED WITH THE NATIONAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES" OF THE SECOND (1971 - 1975) AND THIRD (1976 - 1980) MALAYSIA PLANS. IN VIEW OF MALAYSIA'S DEVELOPMENT NEEDS, THE UPGRADING OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING IS UNQUESTIONABLY AN APPROPRIATE OBJECTIVE. ITS PRODUCT, SKILLED MANPOWER, ESPECIALLY MALAY MANPOWER, CAN BE USED BY THE COUNTRY AT ANY TIME AND IN VIRTUALLY ANY QUANTITY THAT IT IS PRODUCED.

B. TRIPARTISM. TRADE UNIONISM IS WEAK IN MALAYSIA AND NOT HELD IN ESPECIALLY HIGH ESTEEM BY THE GOVERNMENT. ORGANIZED LABOR HAS HAD NO FORMAL INPUT AND VERY LITTLE INFORMAL INPUT INTO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNDP/ILO VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROJECTS. THERE HAS ALSO BEEN NO FORMAL EMPLOYER INPUT INTO THE PROJECTS, BUT SINCE MOST

EMPLOYERS ARE UNDER GOVERNMENT CONSTRAINTS TO INCREASE THE EMPLOYMENT OF MALAYS AT ALL LEVELS, THERE IS GREAT INTEREST AMONG EMPLOYERS IN UPGRADING MALAY SKILLS AND THIS INTEREST HAS PROBABLY LED TO SOME INDIRECT EMPLOYER IMPACT ON THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING SYSTEM, INCLUDING THOSE ELEMENTS OF IT REPRESENTED IN THE ILO PROJECTS.

C. INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT. INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL PROJECT HAS GENERALLY BEEN GOOD IN THAT QUALIFIED PERSONNEL HAVE BEEN PROVIDED BY THE ILO (ENGLISH IS WIDELY USED IN MALAYSIA, SO LANGUAGE IS ONLY A MINOR PROBLEM), THE GOVERNMENT HAS PROVIDED PROPER FACILITIES AND SUPPORTING FUNDS, AND INDIVIDUAL OPERATIONAL PROBLEMS HAVE USUALLY BEEN WORKED OUT SATISFACTORILY. HOWEVER, RESPONSIBILITY FOR VOCATIONAL TRAINING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WITHING THE GOVERNMENT IS SPREAD OUT AMONG A NUMBER OF AGENCIES, INCLUDING THE MINISTRY OF LABOR AND MANPOWER, THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE, YOUTH AND SPORTS,

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THE ECONOMIC PLANNING UNIT IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE AND THE MAJLIS AMANAH RAKYAT (MARA), A

SEMI-GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTION SET UP TO AID THE MALAYS. EACH OF THESE ORGANIZATIONS IS JEALOUS OF ITS RESPONSIBILITIES, PARTLY FOR REASONS OF PERSONALITY AND BUREAUCRATIC CHAUVINISM, PARTLY BECAUSE OF RACIAL FACTORS (E.G., ALTHOUGH SUBJECT TO GENERAL GOVERNMENT-WIDE PRESSURES TO ENCOURAGE MALAYS DEVELOPMENT, THE LABOR MINISTRY HAS TRADITIONALLY HAD A NON-MALAY MINISTER AND MUST PAY AT LEAST LIP SERVICE TO AIDING MALAYSIANS OF ALL RACES, WHILE MARA IS UNABASHEDLY -- AND STATUTORILY -- PRO-MALAY.) THEREFORE, THE ILO EFFORT AT UPGRADING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION HAS BEEN FRAGMENTED AND UNCOORDINATED. IN REF B, PROJECTS 1 (INDUSTRIAL AND TRADE INSTRUCTOR TRAINING PROGRAM), 3 EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING, MINISTRY OF LABOR AND MANPOWER) AND 4 (NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL TRAINING AND TRADE CERTIFICATION BOARD) ARE LOCATED IN THE LABOR MINISTRY; PROJECTS 7 (MARA VOCATIONAL TRAINING PLANNING TEAM) AND 8 (MARA VOCATIONAL TRAINING SECTION DEVELOPMENT) DEAL ONLY WITH MARA; AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PROJECT 2 (NATIONAL ELECTRICITY BOARD TRAINING INSTITUTE) INVOLVES A SEMI-AUTONOMOUS AGENCY UNDER THE MINISTRY OF WORKS AND UTILITIES.

D. SUCCESS OF IMPLEMENTATION. THE MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT HAS NOT YET MADE A BASIC DECISION TO RATIONALIZE THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING SYSTEM IN THE COUNTRY BECAUSE OF PERSONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL REVERIES BASED PARTLY ON RACIAL FACTORS. BECAUSE OF THIS, WHILE THE ILO'S EFFORTS ON INDIVIDUAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROJECTS HAVE HAD VARYING DEGREES OF SUCCESS, THEY HAVE CONTRIBUTED LITTLE TOWARD A SIGNIFICANT UPGRADING OF THE TOTAL, FRAGMENTED, SYSTEM. A CLEAR INDICATION OF THIS IS THE UNDP'S INTENTION, SPELLED OUT IN THE SECOND COUNTRY PROGRAM, TO FUND ANOTHER VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROJECT, THE PURPOSE OF WHICH WILL BE "TO SUPPORT THE ESTABLISHMENT AND STRENGTHENING OF A NATIONAL SYSTEM FOR COORDINATING AND DIRECTING MANPOWER TRAINING." THIS PROJECT WILL FUND A VOCATIONAL TRAINING ADVISOR AT THE MINISTRY OF LABOR AND MANPOWER FOR EIGHTEEN MONTHS AT A COST OF \$110,000. ALTHOUGH IT IS NOT CLEAR NOW WHETHER SUCH A PROJECT WILL BE ABLE TO INSTILL IN THE MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT THE WILL TO RATIONALIZE ITS VOCATIONAL TRAINING SYSTEM, AT LEAST THE PROPOSAL FOR A NEW PROJECT INDICATES

AN AWARENESS OF THE KIND OF FURTHER WORK THAT NEEDS  
TO BE DONE.

4. MEDIUM AND SMALL-SCALE INDUSTRIES CONSULTANCY  
SERVICE (MIDFIC) (MAL/70/015).

A. OBJECTIVES. THE MALAYSIAN INDUSTRIAL  
DEVELOPMENT FINANCES INDUSTRIAL CONSULTANTS  
(MIDFIC) WAS CREATED BY THE GOM TO PROVIDE  
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INDUSTRIAL CONSULTANT SERVICES TO LOCAL  
COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL CONCERNS, ESPECIALLY  
THOSE OPERATED BY MALAYS. THIS PROJECT IS  
DESIGNED TO AID MIDFIC IN DEVELOPING QUALIFIED  
CONSULTANTS IN MARKETING, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT,  
INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING AND PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT.  
WHILE THE ENHANCEMENT OF MALAY MANAGEMENT SKILLS  
IS A LEGITIMATE GOAL IN VIEW OF THE GOM'S POLICY  
TO RAISE THE ECONOMIC LEVEL OF THE MALAY COMMUNITY,  
THERE IS A GLUT OF INDUSTRIAL CONSULTANTS  
ON THE LOCAL MARKET, AND CONSULTANT FIRMS WHO  
ALREADY HAVE QUALIFIED PERSONNEL FACE DIFFICULTIES  
IN FINDING ENOUGH WORK. (THE QUALITY OF MALAYSIAN  
CONSULTANTS IS STILL QUITE LOW, AS FOREIGN  
CONSULTANTS ARE IN GREAT DEMAND IN THE COUNTRY,  
HOWEVER.)

B. TRIPARTISM. THERE HAS BEEN NO WORKER OR  
EMPLOYER PARTICIPATION IN THIS PROJECT, ALTHOUGH,  
SINCE IT IS NOT WITHIN THE SCOPE OF NORMAL ILO  
ACTIVITIES, THE ABSENCE OF TRIPARTISM IS PROBABLY  
NOT RELEVANT.

C. THE ILO EXPERTS WHO HAVE WORKED ON THIS PROJECT HAVE BEEN  
TECHNICALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY QUALIFIED, AND THE GOM HAS GENERALLY  
BEEN SUPPORTIVE. HOWEVER, SINCE MIDFIC WAS FOUNDED,  
THE ORGANIZATION HAS FACED THE PROBLEM THAT THE CONSULTANTS  
WHO HAVE BEEN TRAINED BY THE ILO ADVISORS HAVE TAKEN THEIR NEW  
TALENTS AS SOON AS THEY WERE ABLE AND GONE OFF TO THE  
PRIVATE SECTOR, WHERE, DESPITE THE KEEN COMPETITION,  
SALARIES ARE BETTER. THUS, THE ILO ADVISORS  
HAVE MADE LITTLE HEADWAY IN PROVIDING MIDFIC WITH A PERMANENT  
POOL OF TRAINED CONSULTANTS. RELATED TO THIS, EVEN THOUGH MIDFIC  
CHARGES LOWER THAN COMPETITIVE PRICES FOR ITS CONSULTANT  
SERVICES, BECAUSE IT HAS A REPUTATION AS A TRAINING  
GROUND FOR YOUNG CONSULTANTS LEARNING THE BUSINESS,  
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IT HAS GREAT DIFFICULTIES FINDING CUSTOMERS.

D. SUCCESS OF IMPLEMENTATION. THE MIDFIC PROJECT CANNOT BE RATED AS PARTICULARLY SUCCESSFUL. ITS OBJECTIVES ARE NOT RELEVANT TO MALAYSIA'S NEEDS BECAUSE THE COUNTRY ALREADY HAS TOO MANY MEDIOCRE CONSULTANTS FOR THE NUMBER OF ENTERPRISES SEEKING THEIR SERVICES. BECAUSE MIDFIC DOES NOT PAY ITS CONSULTANTS COMPETITIVELY, THOSE CONSULTANTS WHO HAVE BEEN

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TRAINED BY THE ILO ADVISORS HAVE NOT REMAINED AND SO THE ORGANIZATION S HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO LOOSE ITSELF FROM ITS DEPENDENCY ON OUTSIDE ADVISORS. IN FACT, SEVERAL OBSERVERS HAVE COMMENTED THAT THE ILO ADVISORS SEEM TO BE ENGAGED IN LITTLE MORE THAN PRESERVING THEIR OWN JOBS. WHETHER OR NOT THIS IS SO, IT IS TRUE THAT SEVERAL OF THE MIDFIC ILO ADKFMYS HAVE BEEN IN MALAYSIA FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS AND HAVE MADE VERY LITTLE PROGRESS TOWARD CREATING A VIABLE CONSULTANCY SERVICE. THE ONLY POSSIBLY SUCCESSFUL ASPECT OF THE MIDFIC PROJECT IS THAT SOME OF THE CONSULTANTS TRAINED HAVE BEEN ABSORBED BY THE PRIVATE CONSULTING FIRMS; THUS ILO ADVISORS, WHILE NOT MAKING MIDFIC ITSELF A SUCCESSFUL INSTITUTION, HAVE HELPED TRAIN CONSULTANTS FOR THE ECONOMY AS A WHOLE.

5. REORGANIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL

SECURITY (MAL/74/014). THIS MODEST PROJECT IS AIMED AT UPGRADING  
THE LIMITED MALAYSIAN SOCIAL  
SECURITY ORGANIZATION (SOCSO) BY  
COMPUTERIZING ITS OPERATIONS AND DESIGNING LEGISLATION TO  
BROADEN ITS SCOPE. IN MALAYSIA SOCSO IS RESPONSIBLE ONLY FOR  
EMPLOYMENT INJURY INSURANCE AND INVALIDITY PENSION SCHEMES,  
I.E., INSURANCE PLANS TO COVER TEMPORARY AND PERMANENT  
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DISABILITIES. (THE NATIONAL RETIREMENT PLAN IS THE EMPLOYEES  
PROVIDENT FUND AND HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH  
SOCSO.) ONE OF THE OBJECTIVES OF THE ILO  
PROGRAM IS TO ADD A SICKNESS AND MATERNITY SCHEME AND A  
SURVIVORS' PENSION SCHEME TO SOCSO. EXPANDING SOCSO BOTH  
IN SCOPE AND IN NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES COVERED IS ONE OF THE GOALS  
OF THE THIRD MALAYSIA PLAN AND THIS PROJECT IS A CONTRIBUTION  
TO THAT GOAL. BECAUSE THE PROJECT IS STILL GOING ON, IT IS TOO  
EARLY TO JUDGE WHETHER OR NOT IT WILL BE A SUCCESS. SHOULD THE  
PROJECT BE SUCCESSFUL, IT WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE  
STRENGTHENING OF SOCSO AND, ESPECIALLY IN THE COMPUTERIZATION,  
WILL HELP LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR A FURTHER BROADENING OF THE  
ORGANIZATION'S SCOPE.

6. THE LIST OF ILO ACTIVITIES IN PARA 2, REF B,  
SHOULD BE CORRECTED AS FOLLOWS:

1. ACTIVITY -- VOCATIONAL TRAINING

STAFF -- 13

FUNDING -- 1,236,572/2,156,981

LOCATION -- KUALA LUMPUR

DATES -- 9/69 - 1/76

NUMBER -- UMAL 69-521

2. ACTIVITY -- NEB TRAINING INSTITUTE

STAFF -- 16

FUNDING -- 1,093,250/0

LOCATION -- KUALA LUMPUR

DATES -- 1975 - 1979

NUMBER -- MAL 71-530

3. ACTIVITY -- EMPLOYMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT

STAFF -- 7

FUNDING -- 362,636/49,062

LOCATION -- KUALA LUMPUR

DATES -- 10/69 - 6/75

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NUMBER -- MAL 68-007

4. ACTIVITY -- NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL TRAINING AND TRADE  
CERTIFICATION BOARD

STAFF -- 3

FUNDING -- 206/250/918,691

LOCATION -- KUALA LUMPUR

DATES -- 4/74 -3/76

NUMBER -- MALY 74-001

5. ACTIVITY -- SOCIAL SECURITY

STAFF --3

FUNDING -- 110,000/59,660

LOCATION -- KUALA LUMPUR

DATES -- 5/75 -6/76

NUMBER -- MAL 74-014

6. ACTIVITY -- MALAYSIAN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE INDUSTRIAL  
CONSULTANTS MANAGEMENT TRAINING

STAFF -- 4

FUNDING -- 743,350/0

LOCATION -- KUALA LUMPUR

DATES -- 5/72 - 1/78

NUMBER -- MAL 70-015

7. ACTIVITY -- MARA VOCATIONAL TRAINING PLANNING TEAM

STAFF -- 3

FUNDING -- 129,872/6,092,285

LOCATION -- KUALA LUMPUR

DATES -- 5/73 - 11/75

NUMBER -- MAL 72-004

8. ACTIVITY -- MARA VOCATIONAL TRAINING SECTION DEVELOPMENT

STAFF -- 1

FUNDING -- 37?500,4,989,804

LOCATION -- KUALA LUMPUR

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DATES -- 5/75 -4/76

NUMBER -- MAL 75-004

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**To:** STATE  
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